Processes for Continued Access to Australian Training Ranges in Environmentally Sensitive Areas

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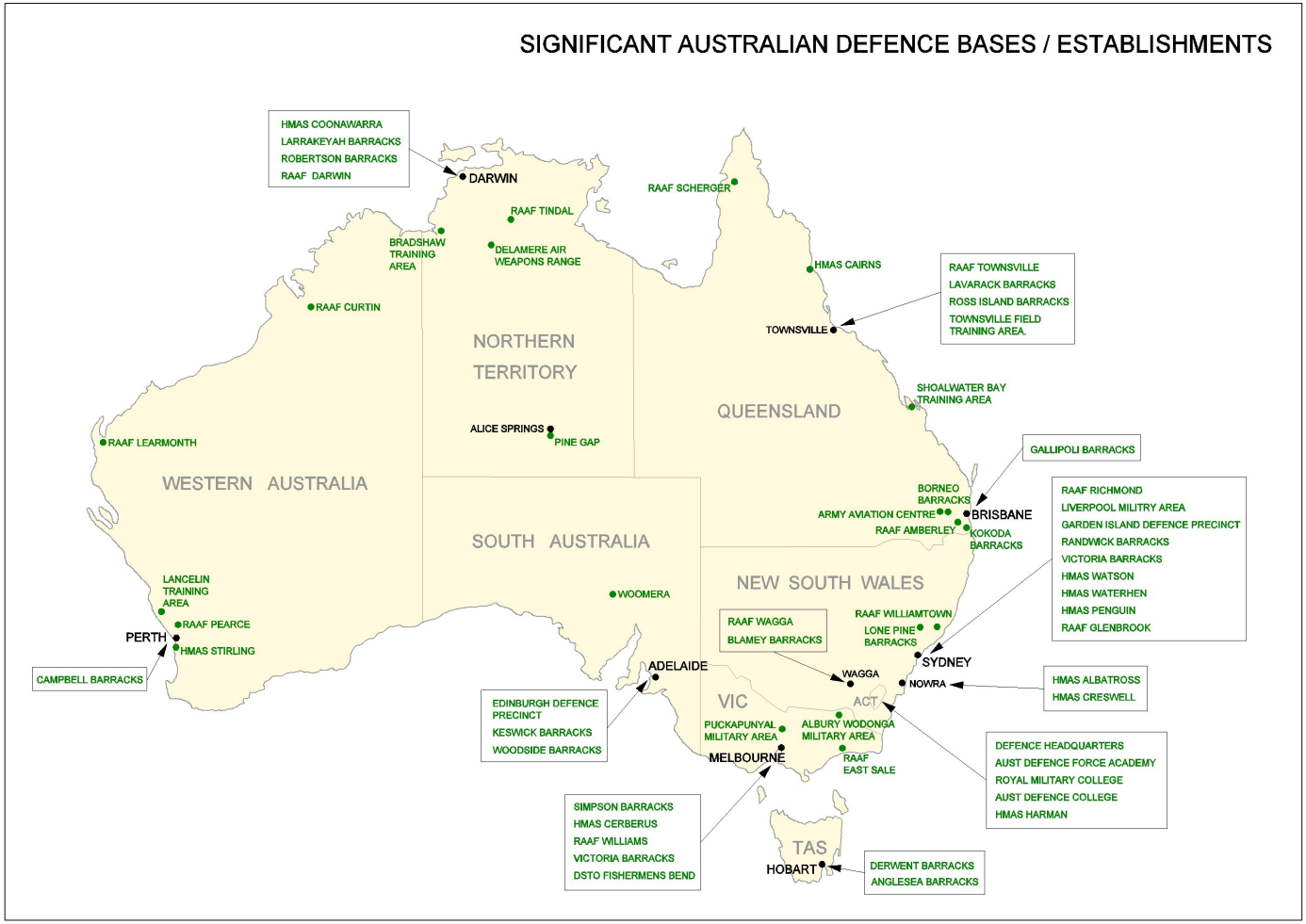
Goals of Briefing

- Outline the importance of US/Australian Combined Training
- Discuss the environmental sensitivities under which the Australian Defense Department operates
- Discuss measures being taken by the US and Australia to improve Australia's ability to sustain US access to its bases

JCTC Concept

- Australia has long been a dependable ally.
- US and Australia regularly engage in joint training
- An outgrowth of the relationship is the:
  - JOINT COMBINED TRAINING CENTER
- Not just one location -Will be spread over a number of areas.
- Center is used because infrastructure will be used to enable complex training simulations across wide areas.
- Interoperability will be improved.

Australian Bases/Establishments



Access requires US/AU planning

- Australia's government is facing public skepticism over training in "high value" areas.
- Good environmental stewardship, including compliance with Australia's legislative mandates, must be demonstrated.
- Environment could be a wedge to deny access.

Bradshaw

Bradshaw

Shoalwater Bay

Amphibious Landing Training

EPBC Act

ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AND BIODIVERSITY CONSERVATION ACT

The Minister for the Environment and Heritage has approval (and exemption) power for Defence activities or proposals

Any action with a potentially significant impact on the environment must be referred to the Minister for the Environment and Heritage

Defence operations can be stopped or delayed through injunctions brought about by the community

EPBC Act - non-compliance

Injunctions

Criminal and civil penalties up to $5.5m or 7 years in prison

Liability of both civilian and military senior personnel within Defence

More stringent compliance conditions

Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority

Australia's Defense Forces (ADF) has worked hard to develop a strong working relationship with the GBRMPA.

The relationship is essential to sustaining ADF's ability to train the Park.

The US must therefore help to maintain the trust and confidence now in place between ADF and the GBRMPA.

Initiatives Currently Underway

- **Joint Statement of Environmental and Heritage Principals for Combined Activities**
- **Environmental sub-working group of the AS/US Operational Working Group**
- **Comprehensive environmental protocols for major exercises**
- **Combined Exercise Plans**
- **Status of Forces Agreement**

WAY FORWARD - Signing JS

Joint Statement of Environment and Heritage Principals – Key points

- In the agreement, both sides committed to:
  - Train personnel to understand environmental and heritage obligations
  - Continual improvement consistent with EMS goals.
  - Minimize adverse impacts on stakeholders and
  - To plan to identify and mitigate risk.

US/AU Study to establish consistent processes/procedures

- OSD funded a study with the goal of establishing consistent processes and procedures to support the planning and conduct of combined exercises.
- OSD, PACOM and ADF are participating
- The project is being performed in an EMS framework and concentrates on major exercises
- Phase I, almost complete, maps Australian and US management systems, processes and procedures in place to meet environmental legislative and management obligations in an EMS context.

Study Recommendations and Next Steps

- **Phase I of the study recommends:**
  - **improved policies and guidance**
  - **Implement AS/US Environmental SOP**
  - **Develop key contacts list**
  - **And……..**
- **Development of an ENVIRONMENTAL GUIDE**
- **The Guide will be funded and is expected in about a year. The Guide will:**
  - **Provide a location to place corporate knowledge**
  - **Be Web based**

Discussion

- **We look forward to discussing points raised in this presentation, but first a training video, illustrating the importance of Australian training areas…..**